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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 000078

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG, S/E WILLIAMSON
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/15/2013
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [UN](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR RIZEIGAT LEADER FEARS BEING PULLED INTO THE
FRAY

REF: 07 KHARTOUM 1950

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Over lunch with emboffs January 16, NGO activist and leading Rizeigat figure Waleed Madibbo expressed his frustration with the Wali of South Darfur over his refusal to allow a planned reconciliation conference to go forward. The conference, which Madibbo had previewed with CDA Fernandez last month (reftel), was supported by the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) group and was intended to bring Baggara Arab Rizeigat, Fur and Massalit leaders into consultations on possible alliances. At the time of his meeting with CDA, Madibbo feared that the government would block his efforts, and apparently he has been proven correct. Madibbo said that he'd asked DDDC representatives to provide a letter to the Wali outlining their support for the conference, but to no avail (poloff will follow up in upcoming meetings with DDDC).

¶2. (C) Madibbo also mentioned his fears that his uncle, the influential and moderate Rizeigat Nazir Said Madibbo, would be "deposed" by the Sudanese government. The Nazir has managed to keep the Rizeigat largely out of the fighting in Darfur, but Madibbo suggested that this restraint could be short-lived. South Darfur's largest tribe was being increasingly pulled into the fighting, he said; Madibbo's analysis was that the Rizeigat would perhaps line up against the government if pushed hard enough or even worse, split into warring factions on both sides.

¶3. (C) Madibbo described the increasingly large numbers of IDPs around his home base of Ed Daein as being reasonably well integrated into the larger community, to such an extent that they might choose not to return to their homes should the security situation permit. Despite the fact that Ed Daein is home to the Rizeigat Nazir, Madibbo noted that most of the inhabitants of the town are now African tribes - Zaghawa, Fur, and others - while the Rizeigat retain their nomadic lifestyle outside of the town.

¶4. (C) Emboffs asked if Madibbo or other civil society leaders had been approached by the UN/AU mediation team to solicit their views on the Darfur peace process. Madibbo said he had not been approached and did not know anything about the visit by UN/AU Special Envoys Eliasson and Salim to Darfur, which were underway at the time of his meeting with emboffs.

¶5. (C) Comment: For someone of his stature, Madibbo was surprisingly uninformed of the ongoing AU/UN efforts in the political process or the status of negotiations. Due to the AU/UN's single-minded concentration on rebel groups, this is perhaps not surprising, but could be a major liability moving forward if the UN/AU team eventually does figure out a

strategy to bring more non-armed Darfurian leaders into the peace process, especially those who have remained non-aligned such as the Baggara Rizeigat in South Darfur. The news of the reconciliation conference being banned is not a surprise as any sort of political or ethnic reconciliation in Darfur not organized by the regime makes the authorities extremely uncomfortable: they fear Darfur's squabbling ethnic groups, all of them impoverished and marginalized, could unite against Khartoum. End comment.

FERNANDEZ